



Comprehensive Community Care and the Department of Mental Health

By Robin Kay, Ph.D.

"We make our community better by providing world class mental health care."

With this inspiring statement, in 1999, Dr. Marvin Southard, Director of the Los Angeles Department of Mental Health heralded the beginning of his departments strategic planning. For the past two years, over 350 stakeholders, including mental health service providers, clients, family members of individuals with mental illness, representatives of the County and state, and the community have developed the Comprehensive Community Care Plan. Among the values embodied in the plan is the recognition that "In order to make our community better, we must use our resources in partnership with others."

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HRSA Funds Finance Project Addressing Access to Care Concerns

By Deb Farmer

The recent addition of federal funds is allowing many Westside health care projects designed to increase access to care to get underway. Last year the Westside Health Coalition, the Department of Health Services (DHS) and other community-based planning groups, developed a proposal for the Federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). HRSA's Community Access Program (CAP) provided \$1.9 million in funding for the proposal - the largest award of the 23 grants. These funds will finance several projects which, together, will create a more efficient and balanced health care system for uninsured and Medi-Cal populations.

The funding allows the Westside Health Coalition to fund a number of projects designed to increase patients' access to care. CAP funds will be used to:

- More effectively link Westside Women's Health Center and Venice Family Clinic to Saint John's Health Center and Harbor/UCLA Medical Center.

- Hire a resource coordinator who will develop an intensive network of specialty care providers.
- Hire a driver and purchase a van to transport people in need of care between primary care facilities and Harbor/UCLA Medical Center in Torrance.
- Renovate Burke Health Center and the Westside Women's Health Center, to increase their capacity for primary care visits.

The Westside Health Coalition consists of 38 community-based organizations whose mission is to develop coordinated health care access and delivery systems for low-income and uninsured residents. The CAP funds allow the Coalition to realize several of its immediate planning goals.

Deb Farmer is the Executive Director, Westside Women's Center and Chair, Westside Health Coalition.

Alcohol Use, Risky Behavior High Among County Residents

An in-depth health survey sponsored by the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services revealed alarmingly high binge and chronic drinking rates among Los Angeles County residents. Of the residents who currently consume alcohol, 23% of men and 7% of women were classified as either occasional or frequent binge drinkers based on their reported drinking patterns. Nine percent of men and 2% of women were classified as chronic drinkers, those who consume 60 drinks per month or more. These statistics are consistent with other studies that show alcohol dependence is the second leading cause of premature death and disability in the county.

Also troubling is that 4% of all adults who drink alcohol - or an estimated 160,000 adults - report that they have driven while intoxicated within the

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In SPA 5, we are striving to achieve this vision of a world-class mental health system by partnering with many other departments and organizations. Innovative programs established through such partnerships include:

A collaboration with local law enforcement agencies in which police officers are trained in basic mental health issues and resources, followed by on-the-street consultation and education provided by a mental health professional and a nurse. A mental health/law enforcement conference supportive of this collaboration is scheduled in May 2001.

- Development of Children's System of Care, a program designed to support children who have multiple mental health and social difficulties. Staff from the Department of Children and Family Services, Probation, the local school systems and mental health providers will ensure a full array of services for children and their families are provided in the most appropriate manner and settings.

- Integration of services for individuals with dual diagnosis through cross training of substance abuse and mental health staff, and the deployment of mental health staff in substance abuse provider agencies.

- We are also working enthusiastically with the Department of Health Services and the exceptional primary care providers on the westside. The mental health community has developed speakers' program featuring a comprehensive list of topics relevant to primary care settings; we are eager to provide in-service presentations to interested agencies. We are also proud of our collaborations in which mental health agencies such as the Edelman Westside Mental Health Center and the Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health Center provide consulting psychiatrists in primary care agencies such as Venice Family Clinic.

It's difficult to capture the fantastic array of opportunities being developed by providers, family members, consumers and our community partners in one article. I welcome your input, questions and participation as we move forward with the implementation of Comprehensive Community Care in SPA 5. I am privileged to work with all members of the community to ensure that mental health resources are available, accessible and integrated into the supports that make the westside a place where our children and families thrive.

Dr. Robin Kay is the SPA-5 District Chief for Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, 310-966-6538.

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last month. Five percent – an estimated 350,000 adults– have been a passenger with a driver they thought was intoxicated within the last month.

"Binge drinking leads to reckless behavior with individuals engaging in risks they may not otherwise take part in if their judgment were not impaired," said Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H., Director of Public Health.

Alcohol abuse, such as chronic and binge drinking, can lead to alcoholism and places an enormous burden on the health care system. In addition to health problems, alcohol abuse is related to domestic violence, unemployment, aggravated family issues and divorce. Approximately one in eight adults surveyed reported that alcohol has had a harmful effect on themselves or a family member – a figure that translates to just under one million adults in the County who have this perception. Respondents in the 18 – 24 age group had the highest percentages of drinking and driving, riding in a car with a driver thought to be intoxicated, and binge and chronic drinking behaviors.

The survey also found variations in drinking patterns across racial/ethnic groups. Twenty-two percent of Latinos reported occasional or frequent binge drinking, compared to 14% of Whites, 13% African Americans and 10% Asian/Pacific Islanders.

What can we do about alcohol abuse?

Communities can take the following actions to reduce alcohol abuse:

- **Enact strong laws on drunk driving, sales to underage persons, and responsible beverage service.**
- **Develop effective public education programs on the health and safety consequences of drinking.**
- **Support active, high visibility law enforcement.**
- **Build strong partnerships in local communities between parents, youth schools, businesses, civic groups, alcohol abuse prevention and treatment programs, and law enforcement to educate people and improve community conditions.**

The Los Angeles County Health Survey is a population-based telephone survey of approximately 8,000 households in the County, examining health and health-related issues for adults and children. Field Research Corporation conducted the survey for DHS with support from the California Department of Health Services and the Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services. The survey was repeated in September 1999 through April 2000; the biennial survey was first conducted in 1997.



L.A. County DHS will celebrate Public Health Week from April 2-7, 2001. The theme this year "Health Days Begin with Public Health" will highlight activities throughout each Service Planning Area. If you would like to participate with your local Area Health Office for an event, please call 310-998-3223.

Westside Teen Summit: Drugs and Alcohol

SPA 5 and Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health Center • Third Supervisorial District

Tuesday, April 3 • 4:30 p.m.

Venice Boys and Girls Club • 2332 Lincoln Blvd. • Venice

A presentation on drugs and alcohol use/abuse among teens. An alcohol I.Q. test given to participants to assess knowledge.

Icilda Sanford, M.P.H., C.H.E.S. • (310) 998-3226

Health Insurance Community Forum

Community Health Services • Third Supervisorial District

Tuesday, April 3 • 3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Kayne-ERAS Center • 5353 Machado Road • Culver City

The forum will provide current health insurance enrollment information.

Randal Henry, M.P.H. • (310) 998-3220

Alcohol Screening (Students Only)

Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health Center • Third Supervisorial District

Thursday, April 5 • 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Santa Monica College • Santa Monica

Alcohol screening available in collaboration with the Student Health Center.

Nancy Wileman • (310) 751-1215

Teen Public Health Awareness and Nutrition

Third Supervisorial District

Thursday, April 5 • 4:30 p.m.

Venice Boys and Girls Club • 2332 Lincoln Blvd. • Venice

A Public Health Nurse and Educator will talk to teens on foods with nutritional value for a healthy lifestyle.

Audrey Goto • (310) 998-3202

Open House

Third Supervisorial District

Friday, April 6 • 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 Noon

The NESS Counseling Center • 8512 Whitworth Dr. • Los Angeles

Refreshments will be served.

Dennis Brown, Executive Director • (310) 360-8512

West Service Planning Area Selected Reportable Diseases (Cases)

| Disease | Oct-Dec 00 | Oct-Dec 99 |
|---------------------------------|------------|------------|
| AIDS | 16 | 16 |
| Amebiasis | 7 | 0 |
| Campylobacteriosis | 20 | 35 |
| Chlamydial Infections | 262 | 243 |
| Encephalitis | 1 | 1 |
| Gonorrhea | 84 | 67 |
| Hepatitis Type A | 4 | 11 |
| Hepatitis Type B | 1 | 0 |
| Hepatitis Type C | 1 | 0 |
| Measles | 0 | 0 |
| Meningitis | 1 | 2 |
| Meningococcal Infections | 0 | 1 |
| Non-gonococcal Urethritis | N/A | N/A |
| Pertussis | 1 | 1 |
| Salmonellosis | 10 | 15 |
| Shigellosis | 3 | 5 |
| Syphilis, primary & secondary | 2 | 0 |
| Syphilis, early latent (<1 yr.) | 0 | 1 |
| Tuberculosis | 22 | 19 |

Data provided by DHS' Public Health programs: Acute Communicable Diseases, Data Collection & Analysis, HIV/Epidemiology, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, and Tuberculosis Control.

West SPA Health Team

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Area Health Officer: | Jack Dillenberg, DDS, MPH |
| Area Medical Director: | Marsha Epstein, MD, MPH |
| Administrator: | Phillip L. Moore III, MPA |
| Nurse Manager: | Audrey Goto, RN, PHN |
| Public Health Nurse Supervisor: | Linda Parente, RN, PHN |
| Health Educator: | Ammini Williams, MA, MPH |
| | Icilda Sanford, MPH |
| Epidemiology Analyst: | Randal Henry, MPH |
| Public Health Investigator: | Carolyn Weinrieb |
| | Ali Fajardi |
| Public Health Nurses: | Beryl Inouye, RN, PHN |
| | Liz Kane, RN, PHN |
| | Jennifer Kilburn, RN, PHN |
| | Alice Brummett, RN, PHN, NP |
| | Shelley Lockett, RN, PHN, MPH |
| | Deanna Ssutu, RN, PHN |
| Clinic Nurse: | Linda Flores, RN |
| Executive Secretary: | Gladys Edwards |
| Clerical Support: | Rita Miller |
| Community Workers: | Sonia Flores |
| Registrar: | Rachel Green |

Chronicle is a quarterly publication of the West Service Planning Area (SPA 5). Phillip Moore III, MPA., is Editor-in-Chief. For additional information call Icilda Sanford (310) 998-3223.

www.lapublichealth.org/spa5/

Community Calendar

The Health Education Unit has developed the West SPA Community Events Calendar. This monthly calendar will maintain all activities such as health fairs, conferences, meetings, school events and other activities of mutual interest for the westside community that will ensure maximum exposure and participation among the community. The calendar will be made available at the monthly Westside Health Coalition. Contact Icilda Sanford, MPH, CHES, at 310-998-3226



WEST SPA Chronicle

West Area Health Office
2509 Pico Boulevard, Suite 325
Santa Monica, CA 90405

Public Health Mission:

To safeguard and improve the health of all Los Angeles County Residents.